

Date: 12 September 2022

Time: 12.00pm – 1.30pm

Location: Virtually via Zoom

Present	Dr David Marshall (Chair)	NISRA, Director of Census and Population Statistics
	Sandy Fitzpatrick	NISRA, Head of Census
	Dr Daniel McConville	NISRA, Census Office
	Richard Elliott	NISRA, Census Office
	Dr Ian Shuttleworth	School of Natural and Built Environment, Queen's University
	Tony Dignan	Economic Research and Evaluation
	Jahnet Brown	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
	Prof Dermot O'Reilly	Department of Epidemiology & Public Health, Queens University
	Dr John Power	Research and Information Service, NI Assembly
Secretary	Mark Hunter	NISRA, Census Office
Apologies	Prof David Martin	Geography and Environment, Southampton University
	Virginia McVea	Chief Electoral Officer, NI Electoral Office

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Dr Marshall welcomed members and opened the meeting by inviting attendees to introduce themselves. Apologies were received from Virginia McVea and Prof David Martin.

A [presentation \(PDF 2.1 MB\)](#) based on the items in the Agenda was prepared for members.

Prior to moving on to the next Agenda item, Dr Marshall explained that the second release of Census Outputs is now unlikely to take place on 20 September as planned, following the death of Her Majesty the Queen. Members will be informed when the final release schedule is finalised.

2. Minutes from previous meeting and action points

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 January 2022 have already been published in draft form with the agreement of members. This draft publication took place given interest from the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR), who are the regulatory arm of the UK Statistics Authority. OSR are interested in the work of DSAG to support the 2021 Census and review the published minutes from DSAG meetings. These minutes were agreed without amendment and will now be published as the official minute of the meeting.

There were four outstanding Action Points from the previous meeting.

AP 1: Dr McConville to review the “Impact of Covid -19” paragraph of the Operational Report and consider changes. Operational Report has been reviewed and amended.

Agreed to close.

AP 2: Jahnet Brown to send NISRA the link to English House Condition Survey – sent following meeting held on 28 January 2022. **Agreed to close.**

AP 3: NISRA to send presentation given at DSAG on 28 January 2022 to all DSAG members – link sent in early February 2022. **Agreed to close.**

AP 4: Dr Marshall to write to Prof O’Reilly in response to his question re. Census microdata with a note that a meeting will be arranged for late 2022 to plan for specific user needs – correspondence sent in early February 2022. **Agreed to close.**

3. Census 2021 – Data Processing Update (Presentation slides 3 to 10)

Richard Elliott gave a presentation that reviewed the Data Processing timeline and informed members of work that has been completed and work that remains. Richard explained that Data Processing consists of four phases as follows:

- Phase 1 Data Consolidation and Preparation
- Phase 2 Deduplication
- Phase 3 Quality Assurance and adjustment for under-enumeration
- Phase 4 Preparation for outputs

Phases 1 to 3 are now almost complete and the process of moving from a Data Processing database to an Outputs database is underway. The current database is complete for the

second release of outputs, containing all people and households and has been checked and verified.

In response to a question from Dr Shuttleworth asking how lower level geographies will be quality assured, Sandy Fitzpatrick replied that the new geography was quality assured for the first release and some more work will be undertaken using 2011 and other data as comparators.

Prof O'Reilly made the point that it would be useful to compare data from 2021 to 2011. An example would be health where questions asked were unchanged between the two censuses. He was of the view that the interpretation of differencing between geographies may not be problematic as things change within areas over the 10 years. Dr McConville pointed out that having multiple geographies would present a disclosure risk.

Dr Shuttleworth suggested that users could be instructed to use grid data for temporal comparison. Dr Power expressed the view that a small area look up table would be useful to reconcile 2011 with 2021.

Dr Marshall concluded the discussion by saying the views expressed by members clearly points to NISRA providing detailed guidance, support and materials for users.

4. Census 2021 – Outputs Update (Presentation slides 11 to 20)

Dr McConville provided an update on Census 2021 Outputs including the Outputs Prospectus, details of Release 1 in May 2022, details of Release 2 Phase 1, the NISRA census explorer app and the new statistical geography. Release 2 Phase 1 will consist of key univariate statistics for demography, ethnicity, country of birth, passports held, religion, religion or religion brought up in, national identity and language at Local Government District Level. Dr McConville highlighted that key univariate statistics for health, disability and unpaid care will form part of Release 2 Phase 2. The explorer app was demonstrated, with Prof O'Reilly remarking positively in regards to the graphics and functionality. Prof O'Reilly asked when the explorer would be available. Sandy Fitzpatrick replied that the prototype is available at explore.nisra.gov.uk and the data will be updated when NISRA issue the next census outputs later in September.

Dr McConville gave members some background into the new Statistical Geography explaining that it was important to line up with Local Government Districts. He explained that the new geography should be more relatable to people looking at local areas. Dr McConville confirmed that Small Areas and Super Output Areas have also changed in response to a question from Tony Dignan.

Dr McConville concluded the Agenda item by briefly outlining future outputs plans. The objective is to have a Flexible Table Builder (FTB) application with census microdata available for users to create their own custom tables online in the first half of 2023. The current plan is that the Office for National Statistics (ONS) will be hosting the FTB application on behalf of NISRA.

5. Census 2021 Quality Assurance – Update (Presentation slides 21 to 27)

Sandy Fitzpatrick gave a presentation on the External Quality Assurance Panel. This panel was formed to provide external assessment of census figures and reported to the Registrar General. Members were given background information and informed of the timelines for both phases 1 and 2. The Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) confirmed the designation of National Statistics, for the outputs from Census 2021 in Northern Ireland, on 23 May 2022.

Dr Shuttleworth asked if there were any issues raised by the QA panel that need resolving. Sandy replied that everything has been dealt with. On the advice of the QA panel, reports will be published in future on enumeration of students, Coverage Adjustment process and the creation, use and management of the Address Register.

6. AOB

Dr Marshall brought the meeting to a close by reiterating that members will be informed of the Release 2 Phase 2 date once it is confirmed.

Mark Hunter (Secretary)

October 2022
